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18 May 1964

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

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USSR-UK: The USSR has resumed negotiations for British industrial equipment.

An official of the UK's Imperial Chemical Industry (ICI) has announced that contracts worth \$140 million for a synthetic fiber complex will be signed within the next two weeks. Discussions involving "very large sums" for equipment for fertilizer production also have been inaugurated.

The negotiations had been dormant since February, probably because of the USSR's concern over its scarcity of foreign exchange and the demands imposed on hard-currency reserves by extraordinary purchases of Western grain. Resumption of negotiations follows an offer by a British financial institution to provide funds for about half the \$280 million in 10- to 15-year credits for the USSR which the British Government had stated it would guarantee.

In concluding contracts in the UK--the only country which has offered long-term credit--Moscow may hope to jar loose competitive credit offers elsewhere. Japanese officials reportedly have just rejected an offer presented by visiting First Deputy Premier Mikoyan to place orders for \$350 million worth of Japanese plants if Tokyo would relax its present five-year credit terms. However, a Japanese chemical plant mission is scheduled to visit the USSR next month.

Khrushchev's program to increase Soviet chemical output by 1970 calls for the import of large numbers of free-world plants and will require new long-term credits of from \$500 million to \$1 billion annually.

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Bolivia: The Bolivian Government is girding for what may be an attempt today by opposition groups to force postponement of the 31 May national elections.

The government reportedly has taken measures to counter the demonstrations and does not expect to have serious difficulties controlling the situation. Three thousand civilian militia have been armed and stationed throughout the city. The US Embassy comments that the reported plans for disturbances may be a government plan to provoke some outburst which would provide an opportunity to crush the opposition.

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DAILY BRIEF

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18 May 64 CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN Map

*North Vietnam: [The North Vietnamese have improved an existing road to provide an alternate route over which they could supply forces in South Vietnam and southern Laos.]

[The road runs south from Route 12 to the area of the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) where the borders of Laos, South Vietnam, and North Vietnam meet. Preliminary analysis of photointelligence suggests the road is passable for trucks to the DMZ area, but that probably only jeeps can use the east-west section along the DMZ. Near the Laos border the road deteriorates into nonvehicular trails and does not connect with any road in Laos.]

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[No traffic patterns on this road have yet been established.]

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South Vietnam: Conflicts within the Buddhist hierarchy seem to portend new politico-religious problems for the Khanh government.

The threatened resignation late last week of Thich Tam Chau, moderate president of the Buddhist executive organization, appears to have been a tactical move to demonstrate majority support for his current pro-government stand. Tri Quang, militant Buddhist leader from central Vietnam, has been trying to swing the organization behind his public complaints that Buddhist grievances against the Diem regime have not yet been fully remedied.

[An associate of Chau claims that Quang is close to Deputy Premier General Do Mau and hopes to set the stage for Mau's eventual take over by fomenting disturbances during religious celebrations this week. This claim is unconfirmed, but some cabinet members are evidently sympathetic to Quang.]

Tri Quang told US Embassy officers on 14 May that there would be no incidents this week unless fomented by the Catholics or Communists. He also admitted that General Khanh had been making efforts to remedy complaints raised, but said if all of his demands were not fully satisfied within two months, he would resume his public criticisms and consider possible antigovernment demonstrations.

Although Quang appears to have been currently outmaneuvered by the government and the moderate Buddhists, the US Embassy believes he is prepared, if necessary, to test his strength against the government and that his present course of action is potentially dangerous.

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